

Approved 9/8/11

**Town of Amherst
Joint Capital Planning Committee minutes
March 25, 2011**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. in the Town Room, Town Hall

Members present: Emily Lewis, Sarah McKee, Kay Moran, Rob Spence, Diana Stein, Jim Wald. **Members absent:** Catherine Sanderson, Doug Slaughter.

Others present: Sonia Aldrich, comptroller; Sanford Pooler, Finance Director; Peter Jessop, chair, Community Preservation Act Committee; Walter Wolnik

Agenda

1. Community Preservation Act Committee report

Jessop said that this year the state will match 25% of the town's Community Preservation Act revenue raised by a 1.5% surcharge on the property tax. CPAC makes recommendations to Town Meeting about spending CPA funds on particular affordable housing, historic preservation, open space and recreation projects. Town Meeting can accept, reject or reduce money for those recommended projects but can neither increase the amount nor approve different projects.

The estimated CPA fund total available for spending in FY 12 is \$966,387, of which CPAC recommends \$755,952 for new projects. \$200,000 will go back into the CPA fund balance for future use. On 3/24/11 CPAC voted to recommend the list of specific projects that appears on the document "JCPC FY2012 Recommendations to Town Meeting," dated 3/24/11. Totals to be spent on each category are:

\$145,203 for affordable housing

\$336,950 for historic preservation

Jessop said the closest vote, 4 in favor and 3 against, was for \$20,000 for a temporary part-time position (consultant) to manage and oversee the completion of 8 historic preservation projects.

\$150,000 for open space

\$122,299 for recreation

\$ 1,500 for administration

The affordable housing, historic preservation and recreation totals include debt service on projects approved by previous Annual Town Meetings.

2. News affecting budget

Moran said that the current best-guess is that the town will receive \$690,000 more in state aid than was anticipated in November when the Finance Committee issued its preliminary budget guidelines. The Budget Coordinating group has discussed a working distribution of that amount which would provide \$150,000 for the capital budget, bringing the amount

of tax revenue available for capital spending to 6% of the levy. We voted last week to recommend using 6.25%, and we have identified three projects to postpone if only 6% is used. Last night the Finance Committee voted a preliminary recommendation that, if even more state aid comes in, the additional amount should be used to increase capital spending to 6.25% of the levy. A better estimate of state aid will be available after April 15, when the House Ways and Means Committee release its state budget recommendation.

3. Finalize capital plan recommendations

Pooler distributed a draft "Report of the Joint Capital Planning Committee April 2011," dated 3/25/11. He reviewed the updated spreadsheets, which include the three projects that would get us up to 6.25%. Pooler and Town Manager John Musante brought the out years (FY 13-16) somewhat more into balance by deferring projects. For instance, \$105,000 in town Information Technology projects was bumped from FY 16 onto the unfunded list. Many FY 13 projects got bumped into future years. A long-talked-about new fire station is now listed as funded by a debt exclusion override; Pooler emphasized he and Musante aren't recommending that right now, but using it for planning purposes to make the 5-year plan less out of balance. Also, renovations to the Jones Library heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems are now listed in FY 14 as funded with borrowing. Pooler and Moran emphasized that the FY 13-16 lists will change as we get closer to those years.

Discussion followed about whether to include CPAC projects on the spreadsheet, as has sometimes been done in the past. Spence pointed out that we don't know what CPAC will recommend for FY13-16, and we just found out about FY 12. The consensus was to include CPAC projects approved by last year's Town Meeting in the FY 11 list but not to put the FY 12 recommended project in our FY 12 list.

Pooler will email the draft report to all JCPC members today. After reading the report over the weekend, any member with changes to suggest will email them to Pooler. The committee voted 6-0, 2 absent, to delegate putting the report in final form to Pooler and Moran, unless major changes are needed, in which case another JCPC meeting will be called to consider them.

4. Approve minutes of Feb. 4 (Sanderson), Feb. 18 (Slaughter), March 11 (Wald), March 18 (Stein).

Stein has submitted her draft minutes but not everyone had read them yet.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m

Kay Moran, chair/acting clerk

DOCUMENTS USED AT THE MEETING

CPAC FY12 recommendations to Town Meeting, dated 3/24/11

Draft dated 3/25/11 of Report of the Joint Capital Planning Committee April 2011